

# HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION MEETING

## Minutes September 19, 2019

Mr. Ford called meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

Commissioners Present: Bob Ford, Chair, Bianca Chang, Kui Zhao, Joan Hash, Peter Hwang, and Leslie Salgado-Tamayo

Staff Present: Ms. Melissa Goldmeier, HRC Legal Counsel, Chaunta Taylor, Recording Secretary, and Yolanda F. Sonnier, Esquire, Executive Secretary

**Public Forum:** Mr. Ford introduced our new members Ms. Mabooka Chaudhry, Ms. Lynda Earle, and Mr. Joshua Kaufman, welcomed them and invited them to the floor for a brief introduction of themselves. All the members expressed their excitement and how they were honored to serve on the Commission.

Mr. Ford reminded the Commission to note their calendars that the October meeting has been moved from Thursday, 17<sup>th</sup> to Wednesday, 16<sup>th</sup> due to the Holland Awards Dinner.

Commission members approved unanimously the **July 18, 2019** minutes at the **September 19, 2019** meeting.

### **Reports**

**CHAIR:** Bob wished everyone a happy Hispanic Heritage month. Then he addressed electing a new Vice Chair, until the end of the year which is needed in his absence. Joan, nominated Bianca, no additional nominees and Bianca accepted. Commission unanimously approved.

**Committees:** Please review reports prior to the meeting. If you have any questions regarding the reports submitted, please bring your questions to the meeting. (\*\*Reports submitted)

#### **Finance and Fair Lending with Housing:** (Scott)

Scott submitted report but wasn't in attendance, Bob gave the Commission time to review.

#### **Legislation:** (Bob/Kui) – Kui discussed her submitted report on the following:

- CR112-2019 a resolution requesting that the Howard County Public School system draft, approve, and implement a lawful multi-year integration plan to ensure that Howard County Public Schools are integrated by socioeconomic factors.
- Maryland Legislature (Enacted): No newly passed bills
- Federal Legislation (Became Law):
  - H.R.866 – 116<sup>th</sup> Congress (2019-2020) Public Law No: 116-30 (7/25/2019)  
Fairness for Breastfeeding Mothers Act of 2019, this bill requires that certain building that are open to the public and contain a public restroom provide a lactation room.
  - S.1749 – 116<sup>th</sup> Congress (2019-2020) Public Law No: 116-33 (7/25/2019)  
Protecting Affordable Mortgages for Veterans Act of 2019, this bill revises loan seasoning requirements related to a refinanced Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) housing loan.

Bob commented that committee report should be emailed ahead of time to be discussed at the meeting. He welcomed the new Commission to join any committee they may have an interest.

#### **Education, Public Safety and Student Life Committee:** Vacant

#### **HRC Awards Committee:** (Bianca/Hector) – Bianca spoke on HRC award nominations and sending out nomination forms in July. Yolanda suggested having a submission deadline on nomination and asked if this is something we may want to incorporate in the future. Bianca stated there wasn't a deadline in the past, they took

nomination until the March HRC meeting and doing it this way they receive more nominations, and it worked well without any issues. Yolanda suggested if the Committee could meet with OHR Outreach team to discuss how we could be of assistance and revisit it at the next month meeting.

- ✚ **Human Trafficking Committee:** (Peter/Joan) Peter stated nothing new to report. Yolanda informed the Committee of the upcoming in Human Trafficking Conference November 8, 2019.
- ✚ **LGBTQ Committee:** (Bob) Bob spoke about The Howard County Pride did very well and how it's outgrown Centennial Park and there is discussion on finding a new venue.
- ✚ **Aging, Disability and Health Care Committee:** Bianca you discussed 3 upcoming events 1) October 2<sup>nd</sup> something Maryland Walk, 2) October 26 Engaging in event 3) Chronic Disease Research group 4) Food Nutrition
- ✚ **HRC Goals Committee:** (Peter/Bianca) Peter suggested that this committee should be combined with committee outreach.
- ✚ **Ad-Hoc / Nominating Committee:** (Peter/Joan) Bob thanked Joan for her hard work on the nominating committing. Joan thanked Bob with helping conduct interview and Chaunta for getting them scheduled. She asked for additional volunteers to join and gave a brief description on the committee function.
- ✚ **Community Outreach Sub-Committee:** (formed following CR-180 Study) (Peter/Hector)

**Student:** Bob inquired what projects are required of the student. Joan explained the different projects that students presented in the past. Peter chimed in explaining that the student come up with their own projects and report on them at our monthly meetings.

**Staff:** Ms. Yolanda Sonnier, discussed the OHR CEX Report case load, and HBI. The Office of Human Rights met with the Police Dept. about how OHR receives the HBI reports as well as revising and signing a new the Memo of Understanding. Discussed upcoming events and invited the Commissioner to the upcoming National Heritage Hispanic event. Ms. Chaunta Taylor asked if any Commissioner were trained in Open Meetings Act, Bob stated Joan and Scott have been trained. Ms. Taylor asked if Counsel, Ms. Goldmeier could discuss proper procedures of transcribing closed session. Ms. Goldmeier explained that the Office of Human Rights shouldn't transcribe and or house closed session recording due to confidentiality. Going forward HRC will be responsible for being custodians of closed session records. Bob ask Melissa if Scott contacted her about Ms. Prasad about her complainant concerns inference to builders overcharging premium fees to the Indian community wanting houses facing East/North. HRC agreed that an official reply should be sent to the complainant. Since Scott was absence from the meeting Bob will follow up with Scott to make sure the complainant gets a follow-up response.

### **New Business:**

**Announcements:** Ms. Sonnier, asked to add to her report, OHR will be starting up 3 Roundtables and if anyone is interested please let Yolanda know. In the initial meeting there will be discussion on how many members are needed, who will be members, how often they will meet and other ideas.

Mr. Ford announced Commission going into **CLOSED SESSION** at 8:31p.m. all members approved.

Mr. Ford announced Commission going back into **OPEN SESSION** at 8:48 p.m.

Mr. Ford adjourned the meeting at 9:03 p.m.